

Applicant : Scott Montgomery  
Appl. No. : 09/990,341  
Examiner : Kambiz Abdi  
Docket No. : 703602.2

### Remarks/Arguments

Claims 1, 27, 46, and 53 have been amended, claims 35, 50, and 57 have been cancelled, and new claim 65 has been added. Claims 1-34, 36-49, 51-56, and 58-65 are pending in the application. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration.

### Rejection of Claims Under 35 U.S.C. 103

Claims 1-64 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. patent No. 6,005,945 to Harry Whitehouse in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2005/0209976 to William F. Bailey. Applicant respectfully traverses.

Claim 1 is patentable because neither Whitehouse nor Bailey, either alone or in combination, discloses, teaches or suggests validating postage for a mail piece by retrieving an indexed postage indicium from a database based on a tracking ID read from the mail piece, as required by claim 1.

Whitehouse discloses a system for dispensing postage. A user sends a postage request for a mail piece from an end user computer to a secure central computer. In response, the central computer generates a postage indicium with a digital signature and transmits the generated postage indicium to the end user computer. The user prints out the postage indicium and places the postage indicium on the mail piece. To validate the postage of the mail piece, a postal authority reads the postal indicium on the mail piece and compares the information read from the postal indicium with other information (see column 21, line 2 to column 22, line 51).

However, nowhere does Whitehouse teach or suggest validating the postage of the mail piece by retrieving the postal indicium from a database, much less retrieving the postal indicium from a database based on a tracking ID read from the mail piece. Rather, Whitehouse validates the postage of the mail piece by reading the postal indicium printed on the mail piece itself. These differences between Whitehouse and claim 1 are neither taught nor suggested by Bailey.

By retrieving the postal indicium from a database, the claimed invention advantageously allows a postage validation procedure to benefit from the security features of the postal indicium

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without having to print the entire postal indicium on the mail piece. This frees up space on the mail piece that can be used for other purposes such as addressing, advertising, etc. Further, the use of the tracking ID on the mail piece is advantageous because tracking IDs are faster and cheaper to print than postal indiciums, which reduces printing load and facilitates printing for mass mailers. In addition, tracking IDs are easier to read than postal indiciums, which reduces the capital expenditure for reading hardware.

For at least the reasons given above, Applicant submits that claim 1 is patentable over the cited references, and respectfully requests that the rejection of claim 1 be withdrawn.

Claims 1-13 depend from claim 1, and are therefore patentable for at least the reasons given for claim 1.

Independent claim 14, 27, and 39 have limitations similar to those of claim 1, and are patentable for substantially the same reasons given above for claim 1.

Claims 15-26, 28-34, 36-38, and 40-45 depend from claims 14, 27 or 39, and are therefore patentable for at least the reasons given for claims 14, 27, and 39.

Claim 46 is patentable because neither Whitehouse nor Bailey, either alone or in combination, discloses, teaches or suggests retrieving and transmitting sender information to a mail recipient based on a sender identification request containing a tracking ID received from the mail recipient, as required by claim 46. Whitehouse does not teach or suggest transmitting sender information to a mail recipient based on a request received from the mail recipient, much less a request containing a tracking ID. These differences between Whitehouse and claim 46 are neither taught nor suggested by Bailey. While disclosing an ID tracking number, Bailey does not teach or suggest that the ID tracking number could be used in a sender identification request from a mail recipient to obtain sender information.

For at least the reasons given above, Applicant submits that claim 46 is patentable over the cited references, and respectfully requests that the rejection of claim 46 be withdrawn.

Claims 47-49 and 51-52 depend from claim 46, and are therefore patentable for at least the reasons given for claim 47.

Independent claim 53 and 60 have limitations similar to those of claim 46, and are patentable for substantially the same reasons given above for claim 46.

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Claims 54-56, 58-59, and 61-64 depend from claims 53 or 60, and are therefore patentable for at least the reasons given for claims 53 and 60.

#### New Claim

New claim 66 depends from claim 1, and is therefore patentable for at least the reasons given for claim 1. New claim 65 is additionally patentable because none of the cited references, either alone or in combination, discloses, teaches or suggests including a tracking ID in the digital signature of a postal indicium, as required by new claim 66.

Support for new claim 65 can be found, for example, on page 34, lines 10 - 14 of the application.

#### Conclusion

Prompt and favorable action on the merits of the claims is earnestly solicited. Should the Examiner have any questions or comments, the undersigned can be reached at (949) 567-6700.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any fee which may be required in connection with this Amendment to deposit account No. 15-0665.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated:

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